

## A FAMOUS PICTURE

Rosa Bonheur's Stirring Masterpiece, "The Horse Fair."

### A PRIZE THAT FRANCE LOST.

The Artist's Native Land Permitted the Great Canvas to Find a Home in This Country—The Story of the Painting and Its Replicas.

One of the chief glories of the Metropolitan museum in New York is Rosa Bonheur's stirring masterpiece, "The Horse Fair," a picture which for its irresistible movement and living portraiture of man's most useful friend holds a unique position in the annals of art and the affections of lovers of paintings.

Few, however, are acquainted with the intimate history of that notable canvas, and fewer still are aware that there are no less than five horse fair pictures in existence. The one in New York is the original and, it will be remembered, was first the property of A. T. Stewart and then purchased for the Metropolitan by Cornelius Vanderbilt for 250,000 francs.

It was painted in Paris, the models used being the horses of the Paris Omnibus company and a few animals studied at the horse market of the French capital. It was first exhibited at the salon of 1853, but went back to the artist unsold.

A part of the further history of the famous painting is recorded by Ernest Gambart in his manuscript memoirs, which have been freely drawn upon for the "Reminiscences of Rosa Bonheur."

"After the closing of the 1853 Paris salon 'The Horse Fair' was entrusted to the Society of Artists of Ghent for exhibition in that town, where it had a great success, but whence it also came back unsold. In the spring of 1854 I expressed to Mlle. Bonheur the desire to buy it from her. At that time it was in Bordeaux, her native town.

"Her preference was that the municipality should purchase it for the city museum, and a price of 12,000 francs had been mentioned at which the town authorities might acquire it. But she said to me that if the canvas came back to her again she would let me have it. However, she could not let it go to England for less than 40,000 francs.

"I unhesitatingly accepted the bargain, and it was agreed that the picture should be mine unless sold to Bordeaux. As the picture was back in her studio again in the following year, I told Mlle. Bonheur that I wished to take it at once in order to have it in my 1855 exhibition and that I should like to have it engraved by Thomas Landseer, the celebrated engraver and brother to the painter.

"She was delighted at the idea of the picture being engraved and said to me: 'I have asked you 40,000 francs for my picture, although in France I cannot get 12,000, and I am pleased at your consenting to my terms. On the other hand, I don't mean to take undue advantage of your liberality. How can we arrange matters? Let us see. Well, the picture is very large, and it will be difficult to find a place for it in an engraver's studio. Besides, you want to exhibit it. Wouldn't it be better for me to paint you a smaller copy?'

"That suggestion she carried out and explains how the second canvas came into existence. That smaller copy was the one from which Landseer's well known steel engraving was made and is the picture which is in the British National gallery.

When she heard that it had become the property of the British nation Mlle. Bonheur decided to make a third copy, thinking the second was not good enough for the London collection; hence "The Horse Fair" No. 3. But the National gallery authorities were not able to accept the substitute, as the painting which it was designed to replace had been given to them as trustees.

Besides these three, Mlle. Bonheur executed a water color replica and a drawing based on a large photograph. Of all these, however, the picture in the Metropolitan is by far the finest work, which is only as it should be in view of the fact that the artist always found her best public in America.

This was recalled to her detriment when the rosette of the Legion of Honor was requested in her behalf. "She has ceased exhibiting at the salon," objected the president, "and sells in America everything she paints." The complete answer to that was that the French government had had the opportunity to buy "The Horse Fair," but had neglected it.—Argonaut.

#### An Accurate Description.

"Did you ever run into a telegraph pole?" inquired the elderly passenger. "Yes, ma'am," said the chauffeur, slowing up the taxicab to avoid a collision with a street car. "I've bumped into telegraph poles, I reckon, two or three times."

"Brings you to a pretty sudden stop, doesn't it?"

"No, ma'am; the machine stops, all right, but I always keep on going."—Chicago Tribune.

#### Curious.

"I had a curious experience yesterday," said Farmer Cornstossel.

"What was it?"

"A stranger came along and told me a funny story and didn't try to sell me anything."—Washington Star.

Obedience is not truly performed by the body of him whose heart is disunited.—Sendt.

## LUCKY SWISS HOUSEWIFE.

She Lets the Rain Do All the Family Washing For Her.

Swiss methods of laundering are original, practical and labor saving. The women there have learned well how to make the best use of their opportunities with the least exertion. How they use the tourists every one who has traveled in the country of the Alps knows. They also know how to make nature do their housework.

In most of the towns everything that is washed or cleaned is washed or cleaned in one of the big watering troughs that stand at regular intervals along the main thoroughfares. Into it goes everything from potatoes to human beings, and the only sanitary regulation existing is that it must be cleaned out with a large broom made of bush or twigs after the potatoes have had their bath. But when it rains then everything else gives way to the family wash, no matter if it is Thursday or Sunday or Saturday or Wednesday, for in Switzerland they seek the rainy days for wash days, instead of deploring a cloudy Monday.

The steady downpour provides running water in the village washtub. Into the sweeping current the family linen goes, and there it is whirled and twirled about until every speck of dirt is thoroughly rinsed away. The scrubbing board is not put into commission at all. Occasionally the good housewife, protected under the family umbrella held over her head by one of her youngsters, who is allowed to enjoy the drips from that same umbrella, takes a look at her wash and encourages it with a gentle poke with her husband's best cane. But the rest of the day she enjoys to the full in her snug chalet, while the elements do her work. In fact, with her conscience at rest that her day's tasks will be done, she can spend her time gossiping with her neighbor, whose conscience is also at peace.

On the next day the wash goes through a process of bluing and starching—all in that same basin—and finally, when the sun shines, it is laid out on the wonderful green grass of the Swiss meadows and is there bleached to a snowy whiteness. If the glaciers and the landslides were to accommodate her by rolling down over her wash and ironing it out without soiling the Swiss housewife would not be at all surprised. In fact, it is not to be doubted that she now regards as an oversight the failure of Dame Nature to provide an ironing board.—New York Post.

### LOST HIS LINEN JOB.

The Salesman Who Made a Caricature of A. T. Stewart.

A. T. Stewart was shown one day by one of his confidential employees an amusing caricature of himself done in pencil.

"Good, good!" he laughed. "That's excellent. Who did it?"

"A young salesman at the linen counter. He scratched it off as you passed the other morning. I managed to get it from him, and now he's scared stiff for fear you'll see it," was the laughing reply.

"Scared stiff, is he?" said Mr. Stewart, with a twinkle in his eye. "Just sent him to me, will you?"

A little later a slim youth entered Mr. Stewart's private office and said he understood he had been sent for. "Yes," said Mr. Stewart gravely and, holding up the sketch asked, "Did you do this?"

The lad grew pale and stammered: "I beg your pardon, sir; it was only a bit of fun. I meant no offense."

"That's all very well, but you'll have to give up your job here," the youth humbly protested, when Mr. Stewart burst out laughing and said: "Don't say any more, my boy. I'm only joking. Your sketch is excellent, and as it would be a sin to keep a man of your artistic talent behind a linen counter I propose to supply you with the means to study art."

Mr. Stewart's proposition was gratefully accepted, and it was thus that John R. Rogers, the sculptor, began his artistic career.—New York Press.

#### His Little Joke.

A well known German who is something of a wag walked into one of the public offices in Cincinnati the other day, and from the noise it was plain that he was wearing a pair of new shoes or ones that had recently been repaired.

One of the clerks remarked about the shoes, and the German said: "I comes pretty near selling dese shoes the other day."

"How is that?" asked the clerk.

"I had 'em half soled," said the German as he walked out of the office.

A deep groan was heard as he slipped through the door.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

#### Not His Fault.

Vicar's Wife—I'm sorry to see you coming away from the public house so often, Priggs.

Blacksmith—Yes'm. They won't let me stay there two minutes. As soon as I get set down comfortable-like somebody's sure to want a job done, and out I has to come again.—London Punch.

#### The Congenial Pair.

Purchaser—Please give me the two seats that have a post between 'em. Box Office—Sorry, sir, but the married couple pairs are all sold.—Cleveland Leader.

#### A Maxim.

To be candid, speak of the present as though they were absent. To be charitable, speak of the absent as though they were present.—Lippincott's.

## LOCUST PLAGUES.

Onslaught of the Ravenous Tribe During an Invasion.

### GLUTTONS BY THE MILLIONS.

The Devastating Armies Fly in Clouds Dense Enough to Obscure the Light of the Sun—The Hoppers That Come After the Crops Are Devoured.

There are several species or varieties of the migratory locust, which are mostly to be found in dry, semitropical countries, such as the south of Europe, Egypt, Syria and Morocco, for their native home seems to be in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, though migratory locusts are to be found in regions as remote as South Africa and South America, where they form a veritable scourge to the agriculturists. In Argentina, especially the northern half of the country, they are very destructive, for they will annihilate the farmer's entire crop in a few hours.

A locust invasion, writes John D. Leckie in Chambers' Journal, is an event not easily forgotten. The first sign of the approaching incursion is usually a long, dark cloud low on the horizon. But the dark cloud is no forerunner of rain. Instead of the precious liquid, which the farmer has probably long expected in vain, it portends the approach of his greatest enemy, the omnivorous locust.

As the dark cloud comes nearer it is seen to be composed of countless millions of locusts on whirling wings. Soon the cloud appears overhead and is sufficiently thick to obscure the sun, which is only seen vaguely, as through a mist, although the sky is cloudless and the air clear.

Now we are in the midst of a dense swarm of flying, whirling locusts, which dash into our faces, enter our houses and fill our rooms with their presence. The air is simply alive with them. All open wells must be instantly covered or they will be polluted.

Fowls and turkeys welcome the advancing hordes. They simply fatten on the locusts as they run around and gobble them up. But this is no blessing to the farmer—far from it, for the flesh of poultry becomes so tainted by this form of diet as to be quite unpalatable, and even their eggs have an unpleasant taste.

So well is this fact known that as soon as the locusts make their appearance in the locality the price of eggs drops to one-half or one-third of their former figure, and even then there are few buyers. All the animals about the farmyard seem to be affected adversely, for even the horses have a strong aversion to eat grass which has been polluted by the presence of locusts, and unless very hungry they will not touch it.

The advance of the locusts takes place as follows: First a few pioneers, the advance guard of the vast army, then the main body of the army, a host which is as invincible as it is destructive. All true locusts are migratory by nature, for the simple reason that, being gregarious in their habits, it would be impossible for them to exist without continual migration.

The ground on which they settle is completely cleared in a few hours, and they must perforce seek other fields and pastures new, where they can repeat their depredations. For the same reason the destruction which they effect is purely local. One district may be completely devastated, while another a few miles away is altogether spared from their presence.

When the locusts have eaten their fill the females commence to deposit their eggs, which they do by making an opening in the ground, in which the eggs are laid. The infant locusts soon make their appearance, scarcely so large as a pea, hopping about in countless swarms. In this stage of their existence they have no wings, but progress by hopping. While in this stage—that is, before their wings are developed—they must be ruthlessly destroyed.

Long trenches are dug, into which the "hoppers" are driven by rows of men, women and boys armed with branches of trees, with which they beat the ground, driving the insects in the direction of the trenches. On the opposite sides of the trenches sheets of galvanized iron are placed upright so as to form an effectual barrier.

On arriving at the trenches the "hoppers" fall into them and cannot easily make their way out, especially as their progress is barred by the wall of galvanized iron in front of them, the smooth surface of which affords them no foothold.

The trenches are soon filled with millions of young "hoppers," the weight of those above crushing to death the under strata of their fellows. Earth is then shoveled on the top of the seething mass of insects, and they are thus smothered and killed.

This is the most effective method of exterminating the locusts, but in order to insure the success of the operation it is necessary that the attempt should be properly organized and that all the neighbors should act in concert.—Providence Journal.

#### The Right Spirit.

"Did Mrs. Brown take her husband's failure in the right spirit?"

"Oh, yes! Just as soon as she knew he was going to fall she went out and bought an entire new outfit."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Life is not dated merely by years. Events are sometimes the best calendars.—Lord Beaconsfield.

## MILITARY ACCURACY.

Exactness in Keeping Tab on the Movements of Soldiers.

We hear much of the perfection of military organization abroad, but it is doubtful whether any foreign war office follows with an accuracy greater than that displayed by our own war department the movements of its officers. The following is an interesting case in point:

A young army officer who has seen service in this country and in the east was once with a scouting party in Arizona. After two weeks in the desert his squad came to the railway near a small station. Within ten minutes a telegram from Washington was brought to him by the station agent. It asked if the officer wished to be transferred to one of the new artillery regiments then forming.

He answered by telegraph that he would be glad to enter either of them. Then with his squad he set off again across the desert.

It was six days later when they again struck the railway, this time eighty miles from the point at which they had previously crossed it, but the officer's reply from the war department was awaiting him. It had been telegraphed to every station within 200 miles.

A more striking instance of accuracy occurred after the same officer's transfer to the east. He was traveling home on leave, and, as the regulations require, he had notified the department of his journey. After he had been on the train for eight hours at a small station the porter entered with a telegram, asking if any one of his name was present. On opening the telegram the officer found that it ordered him to detached duty.

Exactness of detail could not be carried much further. The war department knew the whereabouts of an insignificant second lieutenant even when he was traveling on leave of absence.—New York Herald.

### A SNAKE STORY.

The Reptiles Were Frozen Stiff, but That Didn't Harm Them.

A naturalist once told how in a thicket on a mountain side he saw a man kill a rattlesnake. He bent the life out of it with a club and continued the pounding till it was mangled beyond recognition. When the naturalist remonstrated the man said, "Boss, you can't kill a rattlesnake too dead."

On one occasion a boat bound for the United States from Rio de Janeiro touched at Pernambuco, where the mate drove a bargain with a snake dealer for a half dozen reptiles of various sizes.

The mate had them in a cage on deck and charged a sailor with the duty of washing it out with sea water every evening. All went well as long as the weather was mild, but on the night before the gulf stream was crossed the sailor left a quantity of water in the cage, and about thirty hours from port a biting gale struck the ship.

All hands were busy with the storm, and the snakes were forgotten. When the mate thought of them and went to look after their condition he found them frozen stiff and apparently as dead as the proverbial doornail.

The dealer for whom the mate had brought them came on board the following day. He professed great disappointment over the loss of his intended purchase, but offered to take the snakes away as a kindness to the mate. He gathered them in his arms like so much firewood and carried them home. But a rival dealer afterward told the officer that plenty of warm water had resuscitated the snakes and that they had been sold to various museums not a bit the worse for their "death" by freezing.—Harper's Weekly.

#### The Ambulant Barber.

Paris, like Peking, has its ambulant barber. Armed with a little box, containing the necessary apparatus, razor, badger brush, soap, scissors and serviette, he exercises his calling on the banks of the Seine. All the barges, navies and quay laborers are his clients. "Figaro" seats his patient on the pavement, covers his knees with a newspaper and for a son shaves, cuts his hair and gives a human appearance to the tramp and others who intrust themselves to his care.

#### Odds and Ends.

Uncle Jim, an old negro driver in Richmond, Va., had some ladies to drive through the cemetery. He took them round and showed them the notable graves and monuments and then drove to that part of the cemetery where the derelicts were interred.

"Who are buried here?" asked a lady in the party. "I don't think I ever was here before."

"Oh," replied Uncle Jim, "odds and ends, missus, odds and ends!"—Pittsburg Press.

#### How She Knew.

"Will you have some fresh mushrooms?" asked the hostess sweetly.

"Yes," faltered the guest, "if you're quite sure they're mushrooms and not toadstools."

"Oh, I'm quite sure," replied the hostess. "I opened the can myself."—Detroit Free Press.

#### The Big Bill.

Little Bob (just started in school)—Uncle Harry, what is the bird with the biggest bill? Uncle Harry (who is still thinking of the night before)—A quail, my boy; a quail—on toast.—Judge.

In general, pride is at the bottom of all great mistakes.—Ruskin.

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